DEMAND VII—EXCISE DEPARTMENT.

MR. C. O. MADHAVAN (*Excise Commissioner*): Sir, I rise to move for a grant of Rs. 6,12,826 under Demand VII—Excise Department.

Motion No. 338.

MR. S. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil II*): Sir, I move:—

"To reduce the allotment of Rs. 300 for local allowance to Inspectors by Re. 1."

The object of my motion is to examine whether the production of salt from the existing *alloms* will be sufficient for home consumption. Sir, today there are not less than 45,000 pans. Of these, 9,000 pans are not utilised. From the remaining 36,000 pans, we have a production of 15 to 18 lakhs of maunds of salt during the last year.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Does the member say that the present supply is inadequate for home consumption?

MR. S. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil II*): I do not say that. If I am allowed to proceed, there will be no necessity of these questions.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: In that case, the motion may not be in order. At any rate, further proceedings may be unnecessary. The motion is "to examine whether the production of salt from the existing *alloms* will be sufficient for home consumption." So unless the member says that the present supply is not adequate to meet the requirements of home consumption, there is no use in proceeding with the motion.

MR. S. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil*): The present supply is enough and more for local consumption. That is my argument. The Excise Commissioner says that the large production during the last year was due to the exceptional seasonal facilities. But my submission is that it is not so and that large production is the natural yield from the pans. The long drought which has been experienced last year is, in the opinion of the Excise Commissioner, the cause of the large production of salt. But, at the same time, he does not seem to have remembered the paucity of water in the Manakudi lake.

MR. K. KUNJUKRISHNA PILLAI (*Quilon I*): Is it the opinion of the member that the production of salt must be restricted?

MR. S. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil II*): I do want to restrict the production of salt if it is found excessive. But I want the Government to go into the question in detail and see whether the production from the existing *alloms* is sufficient for local consumption.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: From what Mr. S. Nilakanta Pillai has said, so far as I was able to hear him at this distance, he does not say that the supply of salt is inadequate. If that be so, I cannot see any reason why this motion should be discussed, because, as I have already read—the House will bear with me in reading it a second time— the object

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[Deputy President.]

is 'to examine whether the production of salt from the existing *alloms* will be sufficient for home consumption'. If the production is sufficient, there will be no further use of discussing this motion.

MR. S. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil II*): That is not my point. I want to urge upon the attention of the Government that the present production is over-production ; that it is so I can show presently if I am not unnecessarily interrupted.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT : That does not arise.

MR. K. R. ELENKATH (*Kalkulam I*) : Sir, it may be admitted in this way. When there is sufficient local production of salt, there is no need to import foreign salt.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT : Anyhow it is the mover who has to state his case and I must examine that.

MR. S. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil II*) : Last year we had a large over-production.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT : Unless I am satisfied on this point, I shall have to interrupt the member.

MR. S. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil II*) : As far as possible, I shall try to satisfy the Chair in this respect.

MR. KAINIKKARA M. PADMANABHA PILLAI (*Changanacherry I*) : Sir, We do not exactly understand what the member is driving at.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT : The Chair also has not understood it. I do not wish to say anything more on that.

MR. S. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil II*) : My submission is that the production from the existing pans is sufficient. That is my view of the matter. And I would request the Government to appoint a committee to go into the question and see whether the present production of salt is sufficient. If the Government is going to give more licences without making such an enquiry, the industry will become uneconomic.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT : The House will now adjourn and meet again at 2 'O' clock.

The House adjourned for lunch at 1 P. M. and reassembled at 2 P. M. with the Deputy President in the Chair.

MR. S. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil II*) : Sir, the amount required for consumption here is 12 lakhs of maunds. On the other hand, last year all the salt pans together have produced 18 lakhs of maunds of salt. Consequently, there was an excess of 6 lakhs of maunds. But the Excise Commissioner says that this large production was due to the exceptionally good weather conditions. But it is not true of all the pans existing on either side of the Manakudi lake. There was paucity of water owing to the long drought. Consequently, there was paucity of supply of brine and the manufacture of salt from the

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alloms situated on either side of the lake was almost impossible. Even ignoring these *alloms*, there is over-production of salt and this large production is mostly from 21,000 pans; because, of the 36,000 pans, 15,000 pans are not in proper working condition. Now, I understand, Sir, that efforts are being made to work these 15,000 pans properly and to renew salt culture in the 9,000 unutilised pans. Even according to the most conservative estimate, the yearly production of salt from all the 45,000 pans will come to not less than 25 lakhs of maunds when all the pans are properly cultivated. That is to say, we have 13 lakhs in excess of the quantity necessary for local consumption.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Where did he say that?

MR. S. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil II*): Last year, at this time when this House discussed the demand for grant for the Excise Department.

Then, Sir, I have to refer to another point.

There is loud complaint against local salt, that it does not contain the requisite amount of sodium chloride. The people of Northern Travancore say that Bombay salt and Tinnevelly salt are superior to local salt because they contain more of sodium chloride.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Salt is sodium chloride.

MR. S. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil II*): But there are other ingredients also in local salt. The most important portion of it is sodium chloride. Sir, I understand from reliable authority that it is a fact. The local salt contains magnesium chloride, magnesium sulphate, sand, etc. Sir, these impurities in our salt are due to improper production of salt If properly manufactured, the presence of magnesium sulphate and magnesium chloride can be reduced. So, unless there is a staff of chemists attached to the Excise Department, it is impossible to analyse the various kinds of salt produced in the country. So my submission is that a staff of chemists should be appointed in order to supervise the manufacture of salt and improve the quality.

MR. S. CHATTANATHA KARAYALAR (*Shencotta*): A point of order, Whether all these can be talked under a cut motion under local consumption.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: I think he has come to the close of his speech.

MR. S. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil II*): Sir, when we stop the importation of foreign salt, we must at the same time improve the quality of salt produced here. That is my point. Finally, my submission is that the Government must appoint a committee to enquire into the condition of salt manufacture; to see whether the salt produced from the existing *alloms* will be sufficient for local consumption; to suggest methods to improve the quality; and to consider and report on the desirability of stopping the importation of foreign salt.

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MR. K. KUNJUKRISHNA PILLAI (*Quilon I*): Sir, I rise to support the motion. The real point aimed at by my friend Mr. Nilakanta Pillai is this, if I understand correctly, if we allow the production of salt as at present to continue, the difficulty will be that capitalists will be able to annihilate the small producer in Travancore. Sir, salt is a monopoly, and as such, if you allow over-production of salt, the result will be that the big capitalist will be able to produce enough and more salt and they will be able to manipulate the extent of the quantity produced in such a way to the absolute deteriment of the small holder. I think that is an important point, I think it is a very legitimate point because the Government by making it a monopoly gives special facilities to the producer of salt. That should not be allowed to be exploited by one or two capitalists. They may also be allowed to live. In that view, I am in entire agreement with the mover.

MR. T. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Neyyattinkara II*) : May I know whether any person other than a capitalist can undertake production of salt ?

MR. K. KUNJUKRISHNA PILLAI (*Quilon I*) : There are differences in degree.

MR. G. NILAKANTAN (*Nominated*): May I know whether the member is aware that the department has the power to restrict production?

MR. K. KUNJUKRISHNA PILLAI (*Quilon I*) : The department can refuse to give license and that is an effective way of restricting production.

MR K. R. ELENKATH (*Kalkulam I*) : Sir, I rise to support the motion though not on the grounds urged by Mr. Kunjukrishna Pillai. Sir, salt industry as any other industry ought to be encouraged by Government and the question whether it is in the hands of a few persons or not, is not a point which we have to take into consideration. Salt production, if it has increased, will of course be advantageous to the general public in as much as there will be a healthy competition and improvement in the quality of salt. The price of salt with the approval of Government will come down and in various other directions people can be benefited. They can even export salt which would be of greater advantage to the State than importing salt from Bombay. The recent over-production of salt, I think, is not due mainly to the fact that we have enough and more salt pans, but it is owing to the extraordinary drought which we had last year. Whereas, during 1109, the total production was only 8 lakhs odd of maunds, it is 15,97,371 maunds in 1110 and with the heaps of salt which we had in the storage and salt depot the total comes to 17,50,654 maunds. That would clearly show that the doubling of the quantity is not due to abnormal growth in the number of pans some of which are not at all working as, for example, the Colachel *allom* and some portions of the Rajakamangalam *allom*. Those *alloms* are in existence only in name. Sir, the existing pans do not give sufficient quantity of salt which we Travancoreans require.

last time we pressed upon the Government to desist from the policy of indiscriminately importing foreign salt and upon the

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hon'ble members to see that home salt is made use of by the people irrespective of the taste of people at home. If there are impurities in the home salt, the department could see by expert advice that the impurities are removed even if it involves additional expense. I support the motion mainly on the ground that Government should as far as possible check the inroad of foreign salt from Tinnevelly and Bombay. As it is, we have in the store an excess amount of the quantity greater than we Travancoreans require.

MR. C. O. MADHAVAN (*Excise Commissioner*): Sir, I oppose the motion. Mr. Nilakanta Pillai dwelt upon different points. What he really wants is to restrict the quantity of salt to be manufactured in our factories. In fact, he wants no more lands to be assigned for manufacture of salt. He proceeds on the assumption that, if we manufacture more than what the country requires, it will be difficult to find a market. So far as the yield is concerned, I may inform the House that the yield depends mainly upon favourable weather conditions. Last year, we had a record out-put of over 17 lakhs of maunds of salt. That was due entirely to the exceptionally favourable weather conditions. We had a continuous period of drought for about 6 months. But we cannot always depend upon such favourable weather conditions.

MR. S. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil II*): May I know whether the long drought has been advantageous to the production of salt from the pans existing on the other side of the Manakudi Lake ?

MR. C. O. MADHAVAN (*Excise Commissioner*): Yes. In fact it was due to the drought alone that we were able to get such a large quantity of salt in 1110. So it is not possible for any one to assert that Travancore requires only so many acres of salt pans and no more. For instance, this year we may not be able to approach anywhere near the figure we had last year. Perhaps next year it may be still less. So the accumulated salt for one or two years may be required for consumption in succeeding years when the weather conditions may not be so favourable.

Mr. Nilakanta Pillai also wanted a committee to go into the question to find out how much of salt is required for our State. There is no necessity for such a committee. We have got figures from year to year to show the total quantity of salt consumed in Travancore. Without the help of any committee, the figures are available.

Then Mr. Nilakanta Pillai and some other members wanted that Bombay salt should not be imported into Travancore.

The aim of the Government all along has been to reduce the quantity of foreign salt imported into the State. In the course of ten years, the quantity imported has been reduced to one-tenth. In 1101, Travancore imported 9 lakhs of maunds of salt, from Bombay and Tuticorin, while, this year, the quantity imported was less than 90,000 maunds. The quantity manufactured here has, during that period, increased four-fold. Our total output in 1101 was 4 lakhs of maunds;

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[Mr. C. O. Madhavan.]

last year, it was 17 lakhs of maunds. Even this year, although the wheather has not been so favourable as last year, the total out-put has gone up to over 13 lakhs of maunds.

MR. T. P. VELAYUDHAN PILLAI (*Tiruvella III*): What is the total quantity of consumption this year?

MR. C. O. MADHAVAN (*Excise Commissioner*): About 12 lakhs of maunds.

Attention was drawn to the inferior quality of salt manufactured here. Sir, salt manufactured here is subjected to chemical analysis from time to time; defects, if any, are brought to the notice of the licensees and efforts are made to improve the quality.

Mr. Kunjukrishna Pillai suggested that the present competition among the licensees should be an incentive to them to improve the quality of their salt. That is quite true. The smaller licensees, who complain that they are not in a position to compete with the bigger licensees, can bestow greater attention on the quality of their salt and improve it, so that they could easily get a market for their salt. The Department, by timely advice and proper supervision, is doing all that s possible to improve the quality of our salt.

MR. S. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil II*): Is improvement of the quality possible unless there is proper supervision?

MR. C. O. MADHAVAN (*Excise Commissioner*): Certainly there must be proper supervision. Mr. Nilakanta Pillai suggested the appointment of an expert for this Department to help the licensees to improve their salt Sir, a chemist exclusively for this Department is quite welcome. But it is primarily a question of finance. We have the industrial Chemist; now we indent upon his services whenever necessary.

MR. V. K. VELAPPAN NAIR (*Vaikam*) Is the advice of the Industrial Chemist taken seriously and followed?

MR. C. O. MADHAVAN (*Excise Commissioner*): Certainly. In fact, in one of the factories, he has been given a few pans to carry on experimental manufacture of salt under his direct supervision.

MR. V. K. VELAPPAN NAIR (*Vaikam*): Why is it, Sir, that local salt is inferior to foreign salt?

MR. C. O. MADHAVAN (*Excise Commissioner*): It is not correct to say that local salt is inferior to foreign salt as a class, though Bombay salt may be better in some respects. The quality of salt is no doubt capable of improvement. But that requires the investment of more money for improving the factories, which all licensees are not able to command.

MR. EDAVANATT S. PADMANABHA MENON (*Shertala I*): Is it a fact that there is too much of magnesium salts in the salt produced here?

MR. C. O. MADHAVAN (*Excise Commissioner*): It cannot be called too much. The proportion of magnesium salts may be said to be slightly higher in local salt than in Bombay salt.

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MR. A. EASWARA PILLAI (*Kalkulam II*): What is the percentage of sodium chloride in Bombay salt as well as in local salt?

MR. C. O. MADHAVAN (*Excis Commissioner*): There is not much difference. Sir, for the information of the House, I shall read out the result of the analyses. In Bombay salt, there is 92·48 per cent. of sodium chloride. In Karachi Salt, there is 96·78 per cent. Here, in some factories, the percentage of sodium chloride is almost as high as in Bombay salt, while in some others it is slightly lower.

The Department is doing everything possible for the improvement of the quality of salt, for the increase in the output and for the general development of the industry.

MR. A. S. DAMODARAN ASAN (*Mavelikara*): The report of the Department says that the average consumption of salt per head in 1110 was 18·93 pounds per annum as against 19·32 pounds in 1109. I wish to know the reason for decrease.

MR. C. O. MADHAVAN (*Excise Commissioner*): Sir, that figure represents the quantity isssued from the depots and not the quantity actually consumed by the people. The quantity actually consumed by the people is not likely to vary greatly from year to year. The quantity issued from our depots may vary because there will always be a stock with the merchants which may vary in quantity at different times. Besides, the salt required for human consumption, salt is also used for curing fish. If the catch of fish is good, more salt is used for that purpose. If, on the other hand, the catch of fish is not good, the quantity used for that purpose will fall. That will affect the total consumption for the year.

MR. V. K. VELAPPAN NAIR (*Vaikam*): Is that not due to increased import of foreign salt which is better in quality than local salt?

MR. C. O. MADHAVAN (*Excise Commissioner*): No, Sir; that has no bearing on the average consumption.

MR. N. E. VARUGHESE (*Tiruvalla I*): Since my name and the name of my constituency have been dragged in the discussion, I feel bound to speak on this motion. If my friends' idea is that Bombay salt should be entirely excluded from Travancore, I enter my emphatic protest against any such idea. The people of Central Travancore, or the people of Tiruvella can, I know, very well get on without Bombay salt; in fact, we are so hard built that we can get on without many things. But, Sir, we have got accustomed, for the past so many years, to Bombay salt: it is therefore not proper on the part of the Government to thrust upon us local salt which is not palatable to our taste. Salt, like water and air, is a necessity; and it must be left to each individual to buy his own salt. When the habit of taking Bombay salt is ingrained in us, to say that, merely to encourage a local product, for mere *swadesism* (*Laughter*), we must be compelled to take in local salt which we do not like is a proposition which cannot stand even for a moment.

MR. S. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil II*): Has the member any objection to buy local salt of the same quality as Bombay salt?

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MR. N. E. VARUGHESE (*Tiruvalla I*): It will take a long time before we are able to do it. We shall consider that question when we are able to do it. My friend's question makes it clear that Bombay salt is better in quality than local salt and that there is room for improvement of local salt. Therefore, it will be very hard if we are compelled to go in for salt which is admitted to be of inferior quality.

MR. S. CHATTANATHA KARAYALAR (*Shencottah*): Has it been admitted that local salt is inferior?

MR. N. E. VARUGHESE (*Tiruvalla I*): That is the implication of the question that was put to me by the mover; it has also been admitted by the Excise Commissioner that there is room for improvement of local salt and that the local manufacturers are trying to improve the quality of their salt. Sir, I may assure the House that, when the quality of our salt is improved, we would be the first to go in for local salt.

MR. S. CHATTANATHA KARAYALAR (*Shencotta*): In view of the definite statement of the Excise Commissioner that our salt is not inferior to foreign salt—

MR. N. E. VARUGHESE (*Tiruvalla I*): In these matters, one would rather have his own choice, Sir. (*Laughter*)

MR. K. KUNJUKRISHNA PILLAI (*Quilon I*): Should not Travancoreans be true to the salt of Travancore?

MR. N. E. VARUGHESE (*Tiruvalla I*): Travancoreans have no salt, Sir. (*Laughter*)

MR. S. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil II*): Sir, the reply given by the Excise Commissioner is not at all satisfactory. I do not see what objection there can be to the appointment of a committee to enquire into the matter. Even that, the Excise Commissioner has not agreed to.

With regard to the appointment of an expert for this Department, to improve the quality of the local salt, the Excise Commissioner has no objection, but said that it was a question of finance,

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: The Excise Commissioner said that, from time to time, chemical examination of the salt was being conducted.

MR. S. NILKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil II*): Only occasionally.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: No; from time to time.

MR. S. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil II*): I submit, Sir, that it is for the Excise Commissioner to recommend to Government the need for an expert for his Department. If there is really a necessity, the question of finance should not be an obstacle.

RAO SAHIB S. PARAMESVARA AIYAR (*Nominated*): But, was not the Excise Commissioner speaking on behalf of the Government when he said that there were no funds available now for the appointment of the expert suggested by member?

MR. S. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil II*): It is so, Sir. What the Excise Commissioner said with regard to the appointment of experts or chemists in the department is not at all satisfactory. The question of improving the quality of local salt is a serious one and the Government must take up and tackle the question in all earnestness.

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The reply given by the Excise Commissioner is not satisfactory. My object in tabling this motion is to bring to the notice of this House and the Government the necessity for appointing a committee to enquire into the various aspects of the manufacture of salt in our country. I have achieved that object and beg to withdraw the motion.

The motion was, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

Motion Nos. 339 to 341.

The following motions were not made—

MR. V. K. VELAPPAN NAIR :

339. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 6,184 for salaries by Re. 1.

MR. EDAVANATT S. PADMANABHA MENON :

340. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 6,184 for salaries by Re. 1.

MR. S. NILAKANTA PILLAI :

341 To reduce the allotment of Rs. 200 for travelling allowance by Re. 1.

Motion No. 342.

MR. S. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil II*) : Sir, I move that—

The allotment of Rs. 12,867 for Salt Factories be reduced by Re. 1.

My object in making this motion is to discuss the administration of Salt Factories. Sir, I want to refer to one or two points. When a new area is licensed, there is an agreement between the licensee and the Government that a certain portion of the salt that is produced should be given to the Government and the remaining portion should go to the licensee. The portion that goes to Government is called the *melvaram* and the portion that remains with the licensee is called *kudivaram*. Government sell their portion of salt through the depots. It is only after the salt that is stored by Government is exhausted, I am told, that licensees are given licenses to sell their salt. This is an undesirable state of affairs.

MR. C. O. MADHAVAN (*Excise Commissioner*) : May I know from the member what is the undesirable state of affairs ?

MR. S. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil II*) : Government not issuing licenses to sell salt till they have sold away their portion of salt.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT : It is a matter of general policy. But the grant is for the salaries of Inspectors and their subordinates and for one or two other things incidental to that.

MR. S. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil II*) : Sir, my motion refers to the whole grant.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT : It is only for Salt Factories; and Salt Inspectors do not initiate a policy.

MR. S. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil II*) : Through the Inspectors, the Government initiate their policy.

So, my submission is that the Government should receive money for their portion of salt. The Government must allow the licensees to store all the salt produced by them.

MR. T. P. VELAYUDHAN PILLAI (*Tiruvalla III*) : Why should the licensees compete with Government ?

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MR. S. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil II*): Sir, if both the Government and the licensees appear in the same market for selling their salt, it is likely that the Government will have to compete with the licensees; fearing that there would be competition, the Government do not issue license to the private individuals in time.

MR. A. S. DAMODARAN ASAN (*Mavelikara*) Is there any rivalry in the market between the Government and the licensees?

MR. S. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil II*): Sir, my point is that the Government do not allow the licensees to compete with them.

MR. A. S. DAMODARAN ASAN (*Mavelikara*): In what manner?

MR. S. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil II*): The Government give the licensees permission for transporting their salt only after the Government salt is sold. The Government can sell their salt at a very high rate because the licensees are not allowed to sell their portion of the salt at that time.

MR. KAINIKKARA M. PADMANABHA PILLAI (*Changanachery I*): Who sells their salt at a high rate?

MR. S. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil II*): Government.

MR. KAINIKKARA M. PADMANABHA PILLAI (*Changanachery I*): Is it to the advantage of the Government or of the licensee?

MR. S. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil II*): It is to the disadvantage of the people and the licensees.

MR. KAINIKKARA M. PADMANABHA PILLAI (*Changanachery I*): How can it be a disadvantage to the licensees?

MR. S. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil II*): Sir, when the Government do not allow the licensees to transport their salt and sell it along with the Government, the Government can have their own way in selling their salt; they can fix the price at any rate and there is nobody to question it. On the other hand, if the licensees are allowed to have the whole production with them and the Government receive only money, then the licensees can—

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: All these are beyond the scope of the motion.

MR. S. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil II*): Sir, all these are necessitated by the questions put by the honourable members.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: When I say it is beyond the scope of the motion, it means that.

MR. T. P VELAYUDHAN PILLAI (*Tiruvalla III*): Where does the member get all his information from?

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: The question is out of order.

MR. S. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil II*): Sir, I shall reply his question.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Why should the member be anxious to answer a question which has been ruled out?

MR. S. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil II*): Sir, my submission is this, that the Government should receive money for their portion of

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the salt and allow the licensees to transport all the salt to the various parts of the State, so that they may have the markets in the various centres to themselves.

MR. N. K. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Neyyattinkara I*): In supporting the motion, I wish to lay stress on one point and that is a matter of vital importance from the stand-point of the consumer. I refer, Sir, to the price of salt. The price of salt, as will be seen from the Administration Report, is Rs. 2 annas 3 and this is comprised of Re. 1 annas 9 being the duty per maund, and nine annas being the minimum fixed as per Section 33 of the Salt Regulation. Sir, what I wish to point out to this House is that it is high time that the Government abolish their minimum. In British India there is no such minimum fixed. I presume that this minimum was fixed here with a view to give an impetus to the industry years ago.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: To my mind, the points do not arise in considering this motion. Their rate of selling salt is not a matter for the salt factories The salt manufacturers do not manufacture the rates but only the salt.

MR. N. K. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Neyyattinkara I*): Sir, it deals with salt factories and salt; and in that connection I submit that the price of salt should be reduced. It was evidently as an incentive to the salt industry that this rate was fixed years ago. But the result has been that this minimum of ten annas has only gone to feed a certain number of capitalists. At the same time, we have to extend the equities to the consumers also. Sir, I understand that the cost of production per maund of salt come only to two annas. So when we consider this cost of production along with the ten annas minimum per maund, it will be seen that the manufacturers or the Government make a huge profit

MR. S. CHATTANATHA KARAYALAR (*Shencotta*): What is the basis for the member's assumption that the cost of production of salt is two annas per maund?

MR. N. K. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Neyyattinkara II*): A person who has studied the question and made enquiries in the matter. Sir, I believe Mr. Karayalar will not contest the rate which I have given, very seriously. The point that I wish to urge on the attention of Government is that, while considering these several aspects of the question, Government should reduce the minimum fixed, I mean the minimum of ten annas.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: The member will have to wait for an appropriate place for that. This question does not arise from this motion.

MR. K. R. ELENKATH (*Kalkulam I*): In that case, I wish to raise a point of order.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: You cannot raise a point of order 'in that case'.

MR. K. R. ELENKATH (*Kalkulam I*): Sir I wish to raise a point of order. The object of the motion as given here is to discuss the administration of Salt Factories. The question having been allowed

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[Mr. K. R. Elenkath].

and motion having been moved, I should think that everything concerning the administration of Salt Factories should be included ; or else the motion ought to have been disallowed.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: The word 'administration' has a definite meaning. The administration contemplated is of salt factories. The fixing of the price of salt so munufactured is not a matter for any officer in the salt factory. It is a general question of fiscal policy : and for that reason I am of the opinion that Mr. Krishna Pillai need not develop that point.

MR. C. O. MADHAVAN (*Excise Commissioner*): Sir, I oppose the motion. Mr. Nilakanta Pillai appears to me to be advocating the cause of the licensees, but I doubt whether any of the licensees would welcome the suggestion of Mr. Nilakanta Pillai that, instead of Government taking a share of the yield, as they are doing at present, the Government may demand money from the licensees.

That would be putting an undue burden upon the licensees. At present, they manufacture the salt and Government get a proportion of it and also fix the minimum sale price.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: That is a question of policy. But because the non-official member spoke on it, I am allowing you also to speak on it.

MR. C. O. MADHAVAN (*Excise Commissioner*): That is all that I have to say on that point.

Mr. Krishna Pillai raised another question. I think I need not answer that.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: I leave it to you.

MR. C. O. MADHAVAN (*Excise Commissioner*): There is another motion on the same subject later on. When we come to that, I will speak on that subject.

I hope Mr. Nilakanta Pillai will accept the explanation and withdraw his motion.

MR. S. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil II*): Sir, what was said by the Excise Commissioner is not at all acceptable.

RAO SAHIB S. PARAMESVARA AIYAR (*Nominated*): If he is withdrawing, he is not entitled to make a speech.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Do you withdraw your motion, Mr. Nilakanta Pillai ?

MR. S. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil II*): I shall say that after my speech. I may be allowed to make a short statement.

The Commissioner said that no licensees would welcome my suggestion. If there is a licensee to welcome my suggestion, is the Commissioner prepared to accept my motion ?

MR. A. S. DAMODARAN ASAN (*Mavelikara*): What is the name of the licensee ?

MR. S. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil II*): I am not prepared to give the name of the licensee ; nor am I bound to do so.

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DEPUTY PRESIDENT: So you are prepared to withdraw the motion if the Excise Commissioner gives that undertaking?

MR. S. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil II*): Yes, Sir.

MR. C. O. MADHAVAN (*Excise Commissioner*): I cannot give any such undertaking.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Do you press the motion Mr. Nilakanta Pillai?

MR. S. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil II*): Sir, I have made a suggestion which the Excise Commissioner is not prepared to accept.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: It is not open to the member now to make a speech. He must answer the question whether he wishes to press the motion to a division or not.

MR. S. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil II*): I do not press the motion.

MR. EDAVANATT S. PADMANABHA MENON (*Shertala I*): I object to the withdrawal of the motion.

The question that the motion be allowed to be withdrawn was then put and lost.

The motion was then put and lost.

Motions Nos. 343 to 347.

The following motions were not moved:—

MR. S. NILAKANTA PILLAI:

343. To reduce to sllotment of Rs. 12,867 for Salt Factories by. Re. 1.

MR. S. CHATTANATHA KARAYALAR:

344. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 12,867 for Salt Factories by Re. 1.

MR. N. K. KRISHNA PILLAI:

345. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 12,867 for Salt Factories by Re. 1.

MR. S. NILAKANTA PILLAI:

346. To reduce the allotment of Rs 50,000 for transport charges ef Salt by Rs. 5

MR. S. CHATTANATHA KARAYALAR:

347. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 66,610 for Salt Business by Re. 1.

Motion No. 348.

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*): I move the following motion:

To reduce the total allotment of Rs. 1,26,542 for Salt by Re. 1.

From the Administration Report of the Excise Department for 1110, we find that in 1110 a quantity of 1,91,649 maunds of salt was imported from Bombay into Travancore. A quantity of 12,966 maunds 10 seers of Tinnevelly salt was imported during the period. There is already excess production in Travancore. I submit that there is no necessity to import foreign salt. In 1110, the total quantity of outturn was 17,10,654 maunds of salt, this being an increase of 8,40,040 maunds compared to the previous year. At page 31 of the Administration Report, it is stated that the aim of the Department is to make the State self-sufficient in regard to the supply of salt. In the face of that statement and in the face of the facts already mentioned, I would submit that the House must seriously consider the point I have submitted and accept the motion I have moved, so that we Travancoreans might be true to the salt we eat, as stated by an honourable member.

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MR. A. EASWARA PILLAI (*Kalkulam II*): Sir, I do not find that there is necessity for importing salt from Tinnevelly and Bombay while we have an abundant supply in our own State. We have abundant natural resources for salt culture in South Travancore. If licenses for more pans and *alloms* are granted in our State we will be able to produce more salt, so that this State will be self-sufficient. I press this matter to the attention of the House and the Excise Commissioner to encourage salt industry and the discontinuance of the present practice of importing foreign salt. Travancore salt is in no way inferior to Bombay and Tinnevelly salt. There is sufficient scope for developing this industry.

MR. C. O. MADHAVAN (*Excise Commissioner*): Sir, the honourable member from Nedumangad was objecting to the import of salt from Tinnevelly and Bombay. As I said already, the aim of Government is to stop the import of salt from outside as far as possible. But the import of a small quantity of salt will be necessary. For Shencotta, we have to get some salt from Tinnevelly. Otherwise, if salt is transported from South Travancore to Shencotta, the transport charges will be very heavy. That will make the issue price at Shencotta much higher than it is in the surrounding taluks in the British Indian villages.

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*): May I know whether it is the Government or the contractors that incur transport charges?

MR. C. O. MADHAVAN (*Excise Commissioner*): Generally the transport is made by the contractor and Government pay him. Whether it is by road or by steamer to Quilon and then by train, the transport charges will be heavier than the cost price that we may have to pay for getting salt from Tuticorin. We are now purchasing 12,000 maunds of salt only from Tinnevelly.

MR. K. R. ELENKATH (*Kalkulam I*): May I know from the member how he accounts for the reduction in the consumption of home salt by 2 lakhs, although there was over-production? At the same time, there was an import of 2 lakhs of foreign salt.

MR. C. O. MADHAVAN (*Excise Commissioner*): What is consumed in one year is the salt stocked in the previous year. In 1109 the yield in our factories was very low, and so we had to import an unusually large quantity from outside, partly from Tuticorin and partly from Bombay. The salt sold in 1110 was the salt stocked in 1109. It is the policy of the Government to keep always in stock at least the quantity required for our consumption.

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*): Is it not possible to ask the contractor to transport the salt under the same conditions from Nagercoil?

MR. C. O. MADHAVAN (*Excise Commissioner*): Yes, it is quite possible. But the transport charges and consequently the issue price will be very high. If we send our salt to Shencotta on account of excessive patriotic zeal, the transport charge itself will come to more than the price at which Tuticorin salt is now supplied.

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MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*): Why cannot Travancore salt be taken ?

MR. C. O. MADHAVAN (*Excise Commissioner*) : Unfortunately our Salt Factories are in South Travancore. The cost of transport from there will be very high.

MR. K. R. ELENKATH (*Kalkulam I*) : What is the average cost of production per maund ?

MR. C. O. MADHAVAN (*Excise Commissioner*) : The licensees who work under the monopoly system are paid at the rate of 4 annas per maund. Those who work under the modified system are paid at 2½ and 2 3/4 annas per maund.

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*): May I know from the Commissioner whether the contractor imports Tinnevelly salt in motor lorries or cart loads ?

MR. C. O. MADHAVAN (*Excise Commissioner*) : It comes by train.

MR. N. E. VARUGHESE (*Tiruvalla I*) : May I know whether the Commissioner can positively rely on Travancore for the supply of salt for purposes of consumption ?

MR. C. O. MADHAVAN (*Excise Commissioner*) : To some extent it depends upon weather conditions. Under normal weather conditions, the present factories are capable of yielding as much salt as Travancore requires.

MR. N. E. VARUGHESE (*Tiruvalla I*) : Is it the member's idea that in a majority of cases Travancore has to depend on foreign salt?

MR. C. O. MADHAVAN (*Excise Commissioner*) : Unless the weather condition is so unfavourable, we need not depend on foreign salt.

MR. N. K. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Neyyattinkara I*) : What does the member say about reducing the price of salt ?

MR. C. O. MADHAVAN (*Excise Commissioner*) : Several factors have to be taken into consideration in fixing the issue price of salt. The payment of *kudivila*, establishment charges, etc.—

DEPUTY PRESIDENT : Is the Travancore Government free to fix its own price on salt ?

MR. C. O. MADHAVAN (*Excise Commissioner*): The duty on salt should be the same as in British India.

MR. N. K. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Neyyattinkara I*) : Is there not a minimum which could be fixed by Government by way of price ?

MR. C. O. MADHAVAN (*Excise Commissioner*): 2 rupees 3 annas is the issue price of salt in factories. The licensees should sell at that rate in the factories.

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*): The Government member has not given a satisfactory reply. In the face of the statement made in the Administration Report, the reply is not at all convincing. So far as home salt is concerned, only lip sympathy is being shown by Government and they are not serious to give encouragement to it. In regard to transport charges, the Government member said that it is very high. In these days of motor lorries, we know what the transport charges will come to.

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MR. G. NILAKANTAN (*Nominated*): Can the member give an approximate idea in regard to the cost of transport?

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*): It is the duty of the Commissioner to work out that question.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Can the member give an answer to that question now?

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*): It may cost about 10 or 15 rupees if transport is done by lorries. At least 2 or 3 tins of petrol will be required.

MR. G. NILAKANTAN (*Nominated*): May I know how much salt can be taken by lorries?

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*): That depends upon the size of the lorry.

If the Government are serious to see that the policy enunciated by them is put into practice, it is possible for Government to reduce the cost of the transport charges of the salt and see whether Travancore cannot be made self-sufficient in the manufacture of salt. Since the Government are not serious to see that policy is enforced, I press the motion.

The motion was put to vote and lost.

Motions Nos. 349 to 354.

The following motions were not made :—

MR. PACODE A. NARAYANA PILLAI:

349. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 1,26,542 for Salt by Re. 1.

MR. KAINIKKARA M. PADMANABHA PILLAI:

350. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 4,141 for Assistant Excise Commissioner and Manager by Re. 1.

MR. T. T. KESAVAN SASTRI:

351. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 17,335 for Establishment by Re. 1.

MR. N. JOHN JOSEPH:

352. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 17,335 for establishment by Re. 1.

MR. V. K. VELAPPAN NAIR:

353. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 2,600 for travelling allowance by Re. 1.

MR. EDAVANATT S. PADMANABHA MENON:

354. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 2,600 for travelling allowance by Re. 1.

Motion No. 355.

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*): Sir, my motion is :—

"To reduce the allotment of Rs. 2,600 for travelling allowances by Re. 1".

MR. K. KUNJUKRISHNA PILLAI (*Quilon I*): On a point of order. To discuss the policy and the working of the department on travelling allowance has been ruled out of order several times.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Mr. S. J. Nair will please explain.

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*): Only if the Excise Commissioner travels he will be able to find out the defects.

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DEPUTY PRESIDENT : May I take Mr. Nair to mean like this? I take the object indicated in the motion is to discuss the policy and the working of the department. But the policy of the department has been enunciated with sufficient authority. Whether that policy is being worked properly depends on the head of the department and the others connected with it. If that is the idea, the motion can be discussed.

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*) : That is exactly the idea, Sir.

The Excise Commissioner has been making unnecessary recommendations to Government that big sums should be written off.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT : What is the type of that recommendation ?

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*): It is suggested by the Commissioner that a considerable amount of arrears must be written off. Again he has suggested that a sum of rupees amounting to over a lakh should be granted as remission for 1109 and some such remissions must be given on future occasions also. Again he suggests in the Administration Report that the collection of arrears should be done by the Revenue officers in the State. If the Commissioner had toured the country, he would have understood that the revenue officers are a set of over-worked people and that it is not possible to collect the Excise arrears by them. Further, they are not paid for collecting Excise arrears.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT : The Excise Commissioner's tour has nothing to do with the working of the Revenue Department.

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*) : I do not move my motion if that were the case.

The following motions were not made : —

Motions Nos. 356 and 357.

MR. K. PADMANABHAN :

356. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 2,600 for travelling allowance by Re. 1.

MR. K. PADMANABHAN :

357. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 2,600 for travelling allowance by Re. 1.

Motion No. 358.

MR. K. R. ELENKATH (*Kalkulam I*) ; I move :

To reduce the allotment of Rs. 2,600 for travelling allowances by Re. 1.

My object is to urge that the Commissioner should press upon the Government the need for adopting effective measures for the proper control of customs. The Customs Branch of the Excise Department is one of considerable importance, and I doubt whether the Commissioner in his tours has been able to find out the defects and leakages of customs revenue. Travancore is one of the most important maritime States and the revenue by way of customs is not an insignificant factor to be slightly considered by Government. There are about 71 Customs offices both by the way of land and sea customs. The working of the

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[Mr. K. R. Elenkath.]

department is not satisfactory inasmuch as there is no definite policy pursued by the department. Customs should be separated from Excise is a cry that has been urged for a long time past, but that has not been taken into consideration at all. We see subordinates of the Excise Department and the Customs Officers being transferred very often, so much so, the Customs Officer who is well versed with the inner working of the Customs Department is not afforded facilities to develop that aspect of the Department.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: That is not relevant.

MR. K. R. ELENKATH (*Kalhuam I*): I only point this to show that the separation of Customs from Excise is a cry of the past. This topic was raised in the Public Accounts Committee and the Commissioner stated that Customs is a major Department and that there are difficulties to separate it and put under an independent category. My point is that the Excise Commissioner is not able to concentrate his attention not only in the Excise line but also in the Customs line.

I urge the point that there should be separate audit, at least in the Customs branch, and an officer who is well versed should be in sole charge of that section under the Excise Commissioner in order that he may efficiently see whether there is any leakage in the customs revenue, whether the staff in that section work properly, whether the officers are better trained and to see whether that branch of the Excise Department is better managed. I want only to stress this point on the attention of the Excise Commissioner so that he may take steps to see that a separate department for Customs is created. Now, as it is, the Excise Commissioner has to attend to auction sales, inspection and such other duties. All these consume a good lot of his time and very little attention is paid to customs. On these grounds, I would stress the attention of the Commissioner and through him the Government for bringing greater force and control over the Customs branch of the Excise Department.

MR. C. O. MADHAVAN (*Excise Commissioner*): Sir, Mr. K. R. Elenkath has suggested the better control of the Customs department by the Commissioner travelling more frequently. Of course, I travel as far as I can find time and visit as many customs houses. Besides my inspection, the bigger customs houses in charge of Inspectors are inspected by the Assistant Commissioners once every quarter. The small customs houses are inspected every month by the Inspectors and once every quarter by the Assistant Commissioners concerned. They manifest the copies of the Nalvazhi, and receipts are sent every day from the customs houses to the Assistant Commissioners and these records are examined, verified and errors pointed out if any. So there is very little chance of any leakage of revenue being left unnoticed. Besides inspection by the departmental officers, the bigger customs houses are audited by the officers of the Account Department. All these various steps are taken to detect and prevent loss of revenue.

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MR. K. R. ELENKATH (*Kalkulam I*): May I know whether audit is conducted every year in these houses?

MR. C. O. MADHAVAN (*Excise Commissioner*): In the more important places such as Alleppey, Arukutty and Aramboly, inspection is conducted once every year.

MR. K. R. ELENKATH (*Kalkulam I*): May I know whether the quarterly audit is properly and regularly conducted?

MR. C. O. MADHAVAN (*Excise Commissioner*): Yes, it is very regularly conducted.

Then Mr. K. R. Elenkath suggested the appointment of a separate officer for the Customs Department. I doubt the desirability of such a procedure. The Customs Houses are, as Mr. Elenkath said, over 70 in number. If an officer is to be appointed separately for customs branch, then there should be subordinate officers under him. Whether such a change would be productive of any good commensurate with the increased expenditure is a matter for very serious doubt, especially when Travancore has no separate customs policy of her own. Anyhow that point is not raised for the first time today.

MR. K. R. ELENKATH (*Kalkulam I*): May I know whether the frequent transfers of officers is not detrimental to the efficient working of the department?

MR. C. O. MADHAVAN (*Excise Commissioner*) Frequent transfers of officers, as Mr. Elenkath speaks of, are not common at all. Unless there is sufficient reason, I do not transfer officers at least before the expiry of two years. When there is some complaint or something wrong, as a slight punishment that officer may be transferred. Generally I allow an officer to remain in a station for two years. But there may be exceptional circumstances when an earlier transfer may become necessary. I believe Mr. Elenkath will not press his motion.

MR. K. R. ELENKATH (*Kalkulam I*): Sir, I beg permission of the House to withdraw the motion.

The motion was by leave, withdrawn.

Motion No. 359.

MR. N. E. VARUGHESE (*Tiruvalla I*): Sir, I beg to move:—

"*That the allotment of Rs. 2,600 for travelling allowance be reduced by Re. 1.*"

The object of my motion is 'to bring to the notice of Government the existence of a large number of illicit toddy-shops as subsidiary to all the licensed shops in rural areas'. Sir, this is a state of affairs which is known to all concerned in the department. I believe this is not a new charge This state of affairs goes side by side with the department. The department thinks that this is a necessary evil which cannot be prevented by them. On account of the existence of illicit shops side by side with the licensed shops, corruption is rampant in the department. I may say that there is no other department in the State where there is so much corruption as in the Excise Department.

MR. S. CHATTANATHA KARAYALAR (*Shencotta*): May I know what he member means by 'illicit toddy shop'?

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MR. N. E. VARUGHESE (*Tiruvalla I*): Unlicenced toddy shops where toddy is sold without any restriction.

MR. C. V. CHANDRASEKHARAN (*Ag. Director of Public Instruction*): Is it the toddy shop or the toddy that is illicit?

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Mr. Varughese means shops where illicit toddy is being sold.

MR. N. E. VARUGHESE (*Tiruvalla I*): Yes, Sir.

MR. A. THANU PILLAI (*Trivandrum Rural*): Does it not mean unlicenced shops where toddy is sold?

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Could it mean that also?

MR. N. E. VARUGHESE (*Tiruvalla I*): Sir, I know that in the rural parts there are a good number of such shops. There toddy is sold for a less price than in the licenced shops. The tappers can tap any number of trees. They need not pay any tax for these trees. So they can sell toddy to any one who desires to drink it at a very low price.

MR. A. EASWARA PILLAI (*Kottarakara*): Are there not officers in the department to prevent this?

MR. N. E. VARUGHESE (*Tiruvalla I*): Yes; there are a large number. It is not on account of the absence of subordinates but I will say that it is because there are more subordinates to control the department that such evil exists.

MR. A. EASWARA PILLAI (*Kattarakara*): What are they doing there?

MR. N. E. VARUGHESE (*Tiruvalla I*): They are controlling the practice.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Even alleged corruption in any department need not be repeated more than two or three times.

MR. N. E. VARUGHESE (*Tiruvalla I*): When representations are made regarding these malpractices, they do not take any proper action.

MR. C. O. MADHAVAN (*Excise Commissioner*): Does the member refer to representations regarding malpractices?

MR. N. E. VARUGHESE (*Tiruvalla I*): Yes.

MR. C. O. MADHAVAN (*Excise Commissioner*): Has the member made any representation to any officer?

MR. N. E. VARUGHESE (*Tiruvalla I*): Yes, I have.

MR. C. O. MADHAVAN (*Excise Commissioner*): May I know to whom?

MR. N. E. VARUGHESE (*Tiruvalla I*): I have given representations to several Excise Commissioners and Inspectors.

MR. C. O MADHAVAN (*Excise Commissioner*): Was any representation made to the present Excise Commissioner?

MR. N. E VARUGHESE (*Tiruvalla I*): I remember having given oral information to the present Commissioner. But I have not given written representation to the present Excise Commissioner.

I would like to bring to the notice of the House how they deal with these representations.

MR. A. THANU PILLAI (*Trivandrum-Rural*): May I know how many such shops there are in the knowledge of the member?

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MR. N. E. VARUGHESE (*Tiruvalla I*): A very large number.

MR. A. THANU PILLAI (*Trivandrum-Rural*): I wish to get an approximate number.

MR. N. E. VARUGHESE (*Tiruvalla I*): I cannot say the definite number. In rural areas there are a large number of such shops.

MR. T. K. ALEXANDER (*Kunnatnad I*): Are they more than licenced shops?

MR. N. E. VARUGHESE (*Tiruvalla I*): Yes.

MR. K. P. KRISHNA MENON (*Parur*): May I know which taluks the member refers to?

MR. N. E. VARUGHESE (*Tiruvalla I*): All the taluks, especially the northern taluks.

MR. PACODE A NARAYANA PILLAI (*Vilavankod*): Do they not serve as a support to the licensed shops just as the Anchal Support to the Mail Bus?

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: That question does not arise, because it contemplates implications of a kind. If you are prepared to split up the question, I can allow it.

MR. N. E. VARUGHESE (*Tiruvalla I*): One reason for the existence of such a large number of shops is the subordinates of the department take it as a source of income. I can boldly bring to the notice of the House that almost the majority of the subordinates of the Excise Department do obtain a good remuneration, if I may say so, on account of the existence of these shops. I may tell that every illicit shop or as we call it in Malayalam *Upashop*, is taken by the general public as a legally licensed shop.

MR. A. THANU PILLAI (*Trivandrum-Rural*) Why should those who want toddy go to the *Upashops*? Why not they go to the licensed shops?

MR. N. E. VARUGHESE (*Tiruvalla I*): In the *Upashops* the price is reduced. The *Upashops* are not taxed; and by running them the contractor makes an income over and above the legitimate income. He can sell toddy at a lesser price and so people resort to such shops.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: And they are nearer home sometimes.

MR. N. E VARUGHESE (*Tiruvalla I*): In some places perhaps nearer home. Unless the head of the Department takes this matter very seriously to control the illicit sale, the revenues under Abkari will certainly be decreasing.

MR. PUTHUPALLI S. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Quilon II*): Sir, speaking a few words that would be particularly relevant to the motion before the House, I would draw the attention of the honourable members to what has been stated by the Government at page 5, paragraph 13, of the report of the Administration of the Excise Department for the year 1110. This is what Government say after reviewing the circuit work conducted by the Excise Commissioner in 1110:—

> "Mr. C. O. Madhavan, Excise Commissioner, was on circuit for 105 days and Mr. K. Govinda Pillai who was Ag. Excise Commissioner from 3-3-1110 to 2-4-1110 *vice* Mr. Madhavan on privilege leave, was on circuit for 9 days.

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[Mr. Puthupalli S. Krishna Pillai.]

The head of the Excise Department was therefore on circuit for 114 days during 1110, against 155 days during 1109. When it is seen that this includes the number of days spent to attend the Port Conservancy Board at Cochin, the circuit work of the Excise Commissioner has to be considered rather poor. The circuit work of the Kottayam and Devicolam Assistant Excise Commissioners during 1110 was also not quite satisfactory."

That is what has been stated by Government in an appreciative statement made after reviewing the Excise Commissioner's tour in 1110. Sir, this default on the part of the Excise Commissioner has to a considerable degree led to the decline in the revenue under the abkari section of the Excise Department. The one outward sign of that is to be seen from what has been stated by the Government in paragraph 5 of their review. It is found, Sir, that whereas the total consumption of jaggery arrack in 1108 was 55,179 proof gallons, it fell to 51,112 in 1109 and it has still further fallen to 48,212 in 1110. So in about 2 years' time we find a fall from 55,000 gallons to 48,000 gallons. It would appear that the number of trees tapped during this period has increased by leaps and bounds. In 1110, the increase appears to have been 7,450 cocoanut trees, 604 palmyras and 1867 Chontapana trees. But it would appear that the sale of the toddy shops has not brought to Government any appreciable excess in the revenue collection. Now bearing in mind these two aspects, namely, the steady decline in the consumption of jaggery arrack on the one hand and failure on the part of the Excise Department to bring in more revenue in spite of the fact that a larger number of trees have been tapped on the other hand, the Excise Department owes an explanation to this House. As to why there is a fall in the consumption of jaggery arrack and a decline in the realisation of shop rents so far as toddy shops are concerned, that is capable of only one reason. Sir, there has been a steady decline in the total quantity of foreign liquor imported into Travancore. The Excise Commissioner's statement says that there has been economic depression commencing from 1105, that this is the fifth or sixth year after the commencement of the economic depression and therefore people have reached the maximum limit of their capacity to pay and all that. In the unalloyed name of economic depression several excuses are brought forward by Government, one by the Land Revenue officers in the State and the other by the debtors and a lot of people who bring some excuse or other, and Government say we are not satisfied. In this case I am prepared to say that economic depression has not been the cause for the decline in the Excise revenue. On the other hand, we, the people of the State, Sir, are not prepared to believe that during this period of 1110 there has been any steady decline in the quantity of intoxicating liquor taken by the people of the State. It may be a fact that the people are not able to pay. Then what is the next step? They want to drink. It is to illicit tapping and illicit distillation that people resort. What has been done by the Excise Commissioner to prevent these? The other day it was answered that in one sub-division in charge of an

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Excise Sub-Inspector, as many as 26 cases were detected by the Range Inspector. That is a matter with one sub-division of one Range in the State. How many Ranges have we in Travancore?. And how many sub-Ranges have we in one Range?. From one sub-Range 26 cases have been detected. Very recently in Quilon a barrel full of illicit toddy has been seized Where has the toddy come from? I ask the Excise Commissioner. Out of the quantity sold in every shop if any quantity is not exhausted in the evening, has not that to be destroyed ? If there a single case in which the Excise Commissioner can assure the House that any quantity has been so destroyed ? If it is not destroyed. what is the use that the Contractor will make with that? He will immediately distil it and convert it into illicit arrack. Now if wholesale illicit tapping is going on like this, if whole sale distillation is going on, what wonder there is in the steady decline of the consumption of jaggery arrack distilled in the Government Distillery and a steady decline in the importation of foreign liquor ? What wonder is there? Is it due to economic depression? What is the method of preventing it? Are not the Government interested in preventing it? Are not the people interested in putting a stop to it? For that purpose the Excise Commissioner must be very stringent and must be more vigilant. It is not enough if he merely supervises the headquarters office. Constant inspection and supervision of the subordinates by touring round the country is absolutely necessary. What explanation has the Excise Sub-Inspector got in whose sub-division 26 cases have besn detected, I ask the Excise Commissioner. He said he was innocent. Then is the Assistant Excise Commissioner liable for that?

MR. A. THANU PILLAI (*Trivandrum—Rural*) : Is not the Excise Commissioner liable?

MR. PUTHUPALLI S. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Quilon II*) : I am asking whether he is not liable? Whether all the people in the department from the Excise Commissioner down to the petty officer are not responsible? I humbly submit that all these gentlemen are, and if Government are not going to take severe steps against these officers, you will find in a few months' time the whole revenue of the Excise Department under abkari goes down and irrecoverably down. Therefore supervision on the first hand and effective control on the other have to be more vigilantly exercised.

I understand that there is a distillery at Nagercoil which is reported to have a continuous still. I am told that that continuous still is leaking continuously and it is leaking throughout the year and that it is condemned by the Public Works Department. The man in charge of it does not know when it will burst and destroy life. At any rate that still is not up to the mark. The spirit that is necessary for the Travancore Government for the Hospitals could not be manufactured there. It is an old thing. The system of distillation has considerably advanced now. What steps have the Government taken for introducing the most modern method of distilling? Does the Excise Commissioner know that there is improved method of dis-

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[Mr. Puthupalli S. Krishna Pillai.]

tillation going on outside Travancore. Has he travelled to see that? Has he taken the necessary trouble? I wish to know what steps he has taken? I would therefore submit under this motion that, if the Excise Commissioner had travelled more and had supervised the subordinates more strictly, more earnestly and more enthusiastically, this steady decline in the revenue collections under abkari could have been prevented. If proper steps are not taken, that revenue is likely to inevitably go down in the near future still further.

MR. G. NILAKANTAN (*Nominated*): I wish to make a few remarks. The arrack consumption has fallen from 1,60,000 proof gallons in 1095 to 50,000 last year. What is the cause of this abnormal fall? It is a very serious loss of revenue to the State. I find from the report of last year that 10,170,000 gallons of toddy were drawn and sold. The cost of this toddy comes, at the modest calculation, to about Rs. 65 to 70 lakhs of Rupees. Whereas what is the demand under toddy? It is Rs. 11 lakhs. That means if all this amount is realised by the sale of toddy, the contractors need not grumble at the difficulty of payment of *kist* and would not ask for remission of *kist*. The fact is there is reason to believe that what is not drunk is being utilised for illicit distillation. This in a way accounts for the fall in the consumption of arrack. I have reason to believe this evil fate of the Excise Department commenced from the date of the introduction of the Sub-Inspector system. It is high time that the department consider the desirability of abolishing the system and of going back to the old system.

Again, it is not enough if the Excice Commissioner is an honest officer. There should be more honest officers and men in the department. Then alone can malpractices be checked.

MR. PUTHUPALLI S. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Quilon II*): Does the member think that honesty will be the only salvation for the department?

MR. G NILAKANTAN (*Nominated*): Honesty and selfless work. Certainly; that was why I said that hard and selfless work on the part of the officers was very necessary

During the last reorganisation of this Department, a number of hands was reduced. Unless its past strength is restored to this Department, conditions will not improve. To put down smuggling and illicit practices, the department should be adequately staffed.

One word about the distillery. Mr. Puthupalli Krishna Pillai said that the still at Nagercoil was leaking. Sir, the real defect does not lie there alone. The great mistake that the department committed was to have a still worked departmentally. A lot of money is now being wasted upon it. This work ought to have been entrusted to a contractor Throughout British India and elsewhere, the services of a contractor are secured for establishing distilleries, the Government having a control over the distillery (*President's Bell*) without incurring the responsibility of spending any money.

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MR. C. O. MADHAVAN (*Excise Commissioner*): Sir, we have heard so much about malpractices and corruption in the Department, all leading to the unpleasant consequence of abnormal fall in the consumption of arrack and in the revenue of the Department. I do not deny the existence of malpractices here and there. Mr. Varughese said that trees were being tapped without licenses and toddy was being sold in places other than the licensed shops. Sir, there may be such instances here and there; and there may be subordinates in my Department also who may receive illegal gratification and shut their eyes against malpractices. But I maintain that my Department cannot be said to be the most corrupt department in the State, as Mr. Varughese said. I do not know if Mr. Varughese has made a comparative study of corruption in all the Departments of the State, in order to make that statement.

MR. K. KUNJUKRISHNA PILLAI (*Quilon I*): May I know what rank he would asign to his Department in the matter of corruption?

MR. C. O. MADHAVAN (*Excise Commissioner*): I have not, as I said, made a comparative study of corruption in the various Departments in the State. Sir, the Excise Department, like all the other Departments in the State, is manned mostly by men from Travancore.

MR. PUTHUPALLI S. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Quilon II*): Does the member suggest thereby that non-Travancoreans are proverbially more honest than Travancoreans?.

MR. C. O. MADHAVAN (*Excise Commissioner*): I never said that. My point is that recruitment to all the Departments is made from the same class of people, so that honesty or dishonesty will be the same in all the Departments of the State.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: What the Excise Commissioner objected to was the use of the superlative degree to his Department.

MR. A. THANU PILLAI (*Trivandrum—Rural*): Does the member agree that this Department affords more opportunities for corruption than any other Department?

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: That is a matter of opinion.

MR. A. THANU PILLAI (*Trivandrum Rural*): I want to know from the Excise Commissioner whether he admits it as a fact that his Department affords more opportunities for corruption than any other Department.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: He can do that only as a result of an opinion that he forms. That was why I said that it was a matter of opinion

MR. K. KUNJUKRISHNA PILLAI (*Quilon I*): On a point of order, Sir. I admit Sir, that, at the time of interpellations, matters of opinion cannot form the subject matter of questions. But, during debate, is it not open to a member to ask the member in possession for his opinion on a particular matter?

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: I shall give my ruling on the point later. Now, there is very little time at our disposal for the further discussion of this demand.

MR. C. O. MADHAVAN (*Excise Commissioner*): I was about to come to Mr. Thanu Pillai's point.

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[Mr. C. O. Madhavan.]

I was submitting, Sir, that from the same class of people, recruitment is being made to the various Departments in the State. I agree with Mr. Thanu Pillai that my department affords more opportunities for corruption than some other Departments, the Education Department for instance. (Mr. C. V. Chandrasekharan ; *Hear, hear.*) But, Sir, I may say that this is not peculiar to the Travancore Excise department. Lately, I read the report of the Madras Excise Department where it is stated that almost every cottage in the Presidency had become a distillery. I may say, Sir, that conditions are not so bad in Travancore; *all* our cottages are not distilleries. Conditions seem to be much worse in British India than in Travancore.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT :I do not know if the House will be in order in letting such statements made before it as to conditions in British India.

MR. C. O. MADHAVAN (*Excise Commissioner*) : I am referring to a published report, Sir.

I found more or less similar observations made in the report of the Excise Department of another province also. Conditions, therefore are more or less the same throughout the world. I also maintain that there has not been any phenomenal increase in corruption or in malpractices, of late in Travancore. Always there have been corruption and malpractice here and there in the country and it has been the earnest attempt of the Department always to put down such corruption and malpractice. I asked Mr. Varughese pointedly whether he ever brought instances of corruption and malpractice to the notice of the authorities. He said that he once spoke to me in person about a case. I am sorry I do not remember.

MR. A. THANU PILLAI (*Trivandrum—Rural*) : What has the member to say about the charge of wholesale illicit tapping ?

MR. C. O. MADHAVAN (*Excise Commissioner*) : There is no such thing as wholesale illicit tapping. There may be a few trees illicitly tapped here and there, especially because we issue licenses for tree tapping once in six months from Chingom to Makaram, and from Kumbham to Karkatakam. Before trees are licenced for the second half of the year tapping may in rare cases be commenced.

Mr. Puthupalli Krishna Pillai mentioned an instance in which a special party was sent by me and that party discovered several trees which had not been marked being tapped. I may inform the House, Sir, that all possible efforts are being made to put down corruption and malpractices. Of late, I have had several of my officers punished for failure to take prompt and effective action in such matters. I have nothing more to add, Sir.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT : The time alloted for the Demand has expired, and I now put the Demand———

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MR. A. S. DAMODARAN ASAN (*Mavelikara*): The motion before the House, has, in any way to be put to vote, before the Demand is put.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: When the time alloted for a Demand expires, the demand has to be put

MR. K. KUNJUKRISHNA PILLAI (*Quilon I*): Then, are we to oppose the whole Demand?

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: That is left to the House.

MR. A. S. DAMODARAN ASAN (*Mavelikara*): The rule is that all questions before the House shall be disposed of before the Demand is put to vote.

At page 49 of the Manual, in paragraph 169 (2) it is stated—

"...every question necessary for the disposal of the Demand,,....

There is now a question before the House, *viz.*, that one rupee be reduced out of the allotment for T. A. Therefore, the motion before the House has first to be put to vote.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Yes.

The motion was put to vote and declared carried.

MR. K. KUNJUKRISHNA PILLAI (*Quilon I*): I demand a poll.

MR. KAYALAM PARAMESVARAN PILLAI (*Additional Head Sirkar Vakil*): I demand a poll.

A poll was taken and the House divided as follows:—

AYES—24.

1	Mr.	T. K. Alexander	13	Mr.	M. K. Madhavan Pillai
2	,,	A. S. Damodaran Asan	14	,,	K. A. Narayana Pillai
3	,,	A. Easwara Pillai (*Kottarakara*)	15	,,	Pacode A. Narayana Pillai
4	,,	S. J. Nair	16	,,	S. Nilakanta Pillai
5	,,	T. C. Joseph	17	,,	Edavanitt S. Padmanabha Menon
6	,,	K. P. Krishna Menon	18	,,	Kainikkara M. Padmanabha Pillai
7	,,	Pottayil S. Krishna Panickar	19	,,	R. Raman Pillai
8	,,	N. K. Krishna Pillai	20	,,	R. Sivaraman Nair
9	,,	Puthupalli S. Krishna Pillai	21	,,	A. Thanu Pillai
10	,,	T. Krishna Pillai	22	,,	N. E. Varughese
11	,,	K. Kunjukrishna Pillai	23	,,	V. K. Velappen Nair
12	,,	K. M. Kuriakose	24	,,	T. P. Velayudhan Pillai

NOES—25.

1	Mr.	N. Abdur Rehiman Sahib	7	Miss	Hepzibah Gnanasikamony
2	,,	C. V. Chandresaknaran	8	Mr.	M. Mahomed Haneef
3	,,	S. Chattnatha Karayalar	9	,,	J. M. Joseph
4	,,	R. Dhanukoti Pillai	10	,,	N. Kesava Panickar
5	,,	Antony George	11	,,	T. T. Kesavan Sastri
6	,,	K. George			

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12 Mr. K. M. Krishnan
13 Rao Bahadur Dr. N. Kunjan Pillai
14 Mr. E. K. Kunjuraman
15 ,, C. O. Madhavan
16 ,, K. Madhavan
17 ,, K. Padmanabhan
18 ,, N. K. Padmanabha Pillai
19 Rao Sahib S. Parameswara Aiyar
20 Mr. Kayalam Parameswaran Pillai
21 ,, R. Pitchu Aiyangar
22 ,, V. Ramakrishna Panickar
23 Rao Bahadur A. Rengaswami Aiyar
24 Mr. T. C. Thommen
25 ,, John Whitely Telson

NEUTRALS—8.

1 Mr. K. C. Abraham
2 ,, V. T. Chacko
3 ,, A. Easwara Pillai (*Kalkulam II*)
4 ,, K. R. Elenkath
5 Mr K. Mahomed
6 ,, G. Nilakantan
7 ,, S. Thiraviam Nadar
8 ,, P. K. Thomas

The motion was declared lost.

Demand VII—Excise Department—for Rs. 6,12,826 was put to vote and carried and the grant was made.

Motions 360 to 384.

The following motions lapsed on account of time limit :—

MR. A. S. DAMODARAN ASAN :

360. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 42,172 for Commissioner by Re 1.

MR. S. NILAKANTA PILLAI :

361. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 42,172 for Commissioner by Re. 1.

MR. S. J. NAIR :

362. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 42,172 for Commissioner by Re. 1.

MR. S. J. NAIR :

363. To reduce the allotment Rs. 42,172 for Commissioner by Re. 1.

MR. PUTHUPALLI S. KRISHNAN PILLAI:

364. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 42,172 for Commissioner by Re. 1.

MR. PUTHUPALLI S. KRISHNA PILLAI :

365. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 42,172 for Commissioner by Re. 1.

MR. R SIVARAMAN NAIR :

366. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 42,172 for Commissioner by Re. 1.

MR. R. SIVARAMAN NAIR :

367. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 42,172 for Commissioner by Re. 1.

MR. K. PADMANABHAN :

368. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 42,172 for Commissioner by Re. 1.

MR. T. T. KESAVAN SASTRI :

369. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 42,172 for Commissioner by Re. 1.

MR. N. JOHN JOSEPH :

370. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 42,172 for Commissioner by Re. 1.

MR. N. E, VARUGHESE :

371. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 42,172 for Commissioner by Re. 1.

MR. K. PADMANABHAN :

372. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 41,104 for Range Inspectors by Re. 1.

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MR. K. KUNJUKRISHNA PILLAI :

373. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 10,380 for travelling allowance by Re. 1.

MR. K. PADMANABHAN :

374. To omit the allotment of Rs. 700 for the planting of bamboos at the Cochin frontier.

MR. K. KUNJUKRISHNA PILLAI :

375. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 700 for the planting of bamboos at the Cochin frontier by Re. 1.

MR. K. R. ELENKATH :

376. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 76,151 for Ranges by Re. 1.

MR. K. R ELENKATH :

377. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 3,13,766 for Provincial staff etc., and local allowances by Re. 1.

MR. PUTHUPALLI S. KRISHNA PILLAI :

378. To reduce the allotment of Rs 3,80,101 for Excise by Re. 1.

MR. K. KUNJUKRISHNA PILLAI :

379. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 3,30,101 for Excise by Re. 1.

MR. S. NILAKANTA PILLAI :

380. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 27,430 for Customs by Rs. 5.

MR. T. P. VELAYUDHAN PILLAI :

381. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 27,430 for Customs by Re. 1.

MR. S. J. NAIR :

382. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 90,188 for Customs by Re. 1.

MR. CHANGANACHERY K. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI :

383. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 90,183 for Customs by Re. 1.

MR. T. P. VELAYUDHAN PILLAI :

384. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 90, 183 for Customs by Rs. 5.

DEMAND VIII—ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE.

MR. KAYALAM PARAMESVARAN PILLAI (*Additional Head Sirkar Vakil*) : Sir, I rise to move for a grant, not exceedings Rs. 10,76,241 under Demand VIII—Administration of Justice.

Motion No. 385.

MR. KAINIKKARA M. PADMANABHA PILLAI (*Changanachery I*) : Sir, I beg to move—

"*That the allotment of Rs. 8,189 for salaries be reduced by Re. 1.*"

MR. KAYALAM PARAMESVARAN PILLAI (*Additional Head Sirkar Vakil*) : Sir, I rise to a point of order. Sir, the amount refers to the salaries of the Registrar, the Deputy Regitsrar, the Manager and the Special Officer for Law's Delays. So far as these four officers are concerned, they have nothing to do with the importation of outsiders as High Court Judges.

MR. A. THANU PILLAI (*Trivandrum-Rural*) : Following the rulings we have had in this House,——

DEPUTY PRESIDENT : Will the member kindly lay his hands on any particular ruling ? I cannot act on a general statement like that.

MR. A. THANU PILLAI (*Trivandrum-Rural*) : Under establishment charges, when a particular duty devolves on the clerks, a discussion is allowed under that head.

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